PATHWAY TO GOD

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devoted to Religion, Philosophy, Mysticism & Science of Yoga

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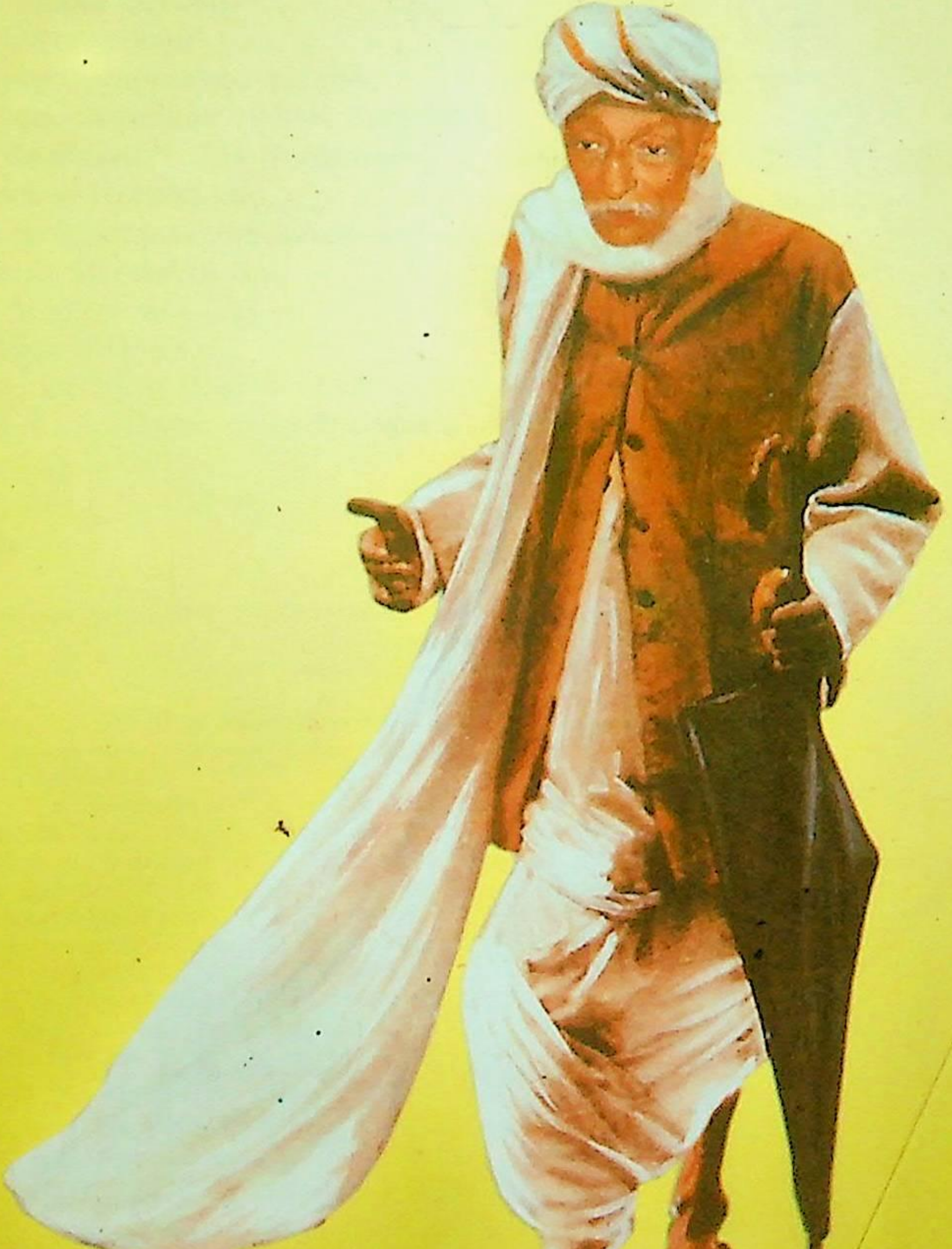
JULY-SEPTEMBER 2008

ACADEMY OF COMPRATIVE PHILOSOPHY & RELIGION, Belgaum



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Editorial Committee : **Shri. Chandrakant Kusnoor**, *Editor-in-Chief.*
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Editorial

Musings Of The Editor....

Elite Readers,

We are back again with a very happy news. The most remarkable even to be shared with you is that two members of ACPR, Mr. M. B. Zirali, Secretary and Trustee and Mr. Subramanya Bhat, Trustee attended 22nd World Congress of Philosophy held at Seol, South Korea during July 08. They took active part in spreading the thoughts of Gurudev by displaying the works and pamphlets related to Gurudev's life and teachings. We are sure this mission will help further progress in Gurudev's global call for awareness of unity of humanity.

***

.....At last the Olympic Games at Beijing had a grand finale. But the slogan, 'One Nation, One Dream' still lingers in the years of millions. It's significant too specially in the face of the fast disintegrating world, disintegrating nations, disintegrating states, what's worse, disintegrating families....The dream of a unified world will remain only a Utopia unless, first and foremost, the families stay re-integrated since unification process starts at that stage. Today the world over we witness divided families. A SWOT analysis (Strength, Weakness, Opportunities and Threats)

might very well claim such chief positive aspects of divided families as independence, individual growth, self-reliance, free-space and 'I-will-do-as-I-like' attitude. But it has a shocking negative side. The chief being the culture, traditions, human values, love, affection, consideration, empathy which form the edifice of the family are shaking. 'I-for-myself' is the watch-word today. The need now is bringing about the harmony between the two generations because they form the holding roots and sprouting branches of a tree. We air about the grand achievements in every field but each individual is becoming a hollow deep within. The IT revolution might very well have brought the globe to your house but the minds have gone far away. The ever-widening gulf between two generations is appaling. There are mounting clashes resulting into separations between older and younger generations with convincing justifications from each. Not that there were no such clashes in the past they were only skin-deep, rather only on the physical level but today they have penetrated into the vital, mental levels which is a danger signal. The stark reality is that both belonging to the young and the old generations, feel insecure despite financial security. The young are seeking shelter by settling abroad while the old are resorting to old-age homes being remembered only on father's day, mother's day (some time there will be even sister's day, brother's day, wife's or husband's day !) Nonetheless deep within the young starve for the parental love and the old for the enthused love of the children. Each one is deprived of the other not knowing that it's all his own making.

Today, the world is moving so fast that even a difference of 2-3 years between two persons is branded as *not just thought-gap it is generation -gap as well. Hence it is sine qua non to keep pace with the current of life on the one hand and hold strongly to the roots of human values on the other. No doubt it is a challenge, a problem but not at all an insoluble one. Albert Einstein says: 'You can't solve a problem on the same level on which it was created. You have to rise above it to the next level'. How true! All need be proactive, open-minded and receptive to what the Divine Precepter, Lord Krishna proclaims in the Gita :*

उद्धरेदात्मनाऽत्मानम् नात्मानमसादयेत् ।
आत्मैवह्यात्मनो बन्धुरात्मैवरिपुरात्मनः ॥

*The Gita :*आत्मसंयोग:*6:5*

(Man should deliver himself from his own mind. He should not make it a target of grief. Because mind itself is his friend and foe). This truth is put in very simple terms by John Milton in his Paradise Lost : 'It's the mind that makes heaven of hell and hell of heaven.'

Let's realize the true import of this and seek solutions to bridge the widened chasm between the two generations. Let each one of the two generations first accept that no one really bad; it's the circumstances that make him so and that it is a universal truth that each one in the society is an indispensable and useful entity needed in the progression of the World Mother's Divine Plan. 2. Each one of the two generations should shun a bit of his/her ego. 3. Proper reciprocation is the very breath for safeguarding the human values. Let man and man reciprocate properly and punctually eg., replying to letters, e-mails, courtesy calls etc., Otherwise traffic hazards resulting into fatal accidents are inevitable on the path of humanity. 4. Wrath, ill-will, hatred, jealousy are mind-pollutants; they are like poison trees, they *kill the person who nurtures and waters them secretly in his heart. 5. Our horizons should be widened, must go beyond the transitory, mundane and material things. Instead of indulging in small, unproductive talk over worldly objects and persons why not aim at higher, nobler goals in life ? Being the crown of creation, only man can go beyond ordinary things. Achrya Madhva in his work Shree Krishnamruta Maharnava states :*

वित्तं बन्धुवर्य: कर्मविद्याचैव तु पन्चर्मा ।
एतनि मान्यस्थानानि-गरीयो यद्यदु (हयुत्तरो) त्तरं ॥ २५३

It means wealth, relations, age, sacred deeds and God-knowledge these five are respectworthy and each of them should be adored in an ascending order.

Human life is precious; making big issues of trifling things is a stupidity; it's like creating a storm in a tea cup. When we start thinking with empathy many clouds of misconception are dissolved. The best way is to sit across the table and crack down the issues dispassionately. 6. Let the people of older generation understand the stressful conditions under which their children study/ work. Let the children understand the inevitable senility of their parents and the consequent geriatric problems they face. 7. If children are the juicy apples of their parents' eyes suffused with their life-energy and smartness, parents are the living props with their mature thoughts, empirical knowledge and wisdom. If the former are the branches of a tree, the latter are the very roots. A tree has no meaning without either of them. Let the one derive the strength from the other in broader interests. After all it is the Dharma- Manava Dharma- with the help of the study of the Scriptures, classics, literature and history that can bind them together in the sacred thread of love and empathy. 8. Instead of pulling one another's *legs let's try to help one another in climbing higher ladders of life.*

It is time that the people of the two generations bestir themselves from the habitual laying-blame-attitude and apathy and pledge themselves to the task of reconstruction of one vision and common human values by synergy. Let us all be pro-active in making this earth-life a divine one. May the Invisible Hand of the Divine and the powerful forces of the universe help us realize this end.

***

We are glad and beholden to many of our intellectually awakened readers who have responded to our previous issue constructively by their appreciation and suggestions. The Editorial Board will place them before the Board of Trustees and try to implement them. We look forward to your opinions which alone help us emulate ourselves in this endeavour.

Till then may these spiritual blossoms pervade their fragrance in your hearts.

Truly yours,
Dr. Madhumati M. Kulkarni,
Editorial Board.

***

Thus Spake Gurudev.....

ONE GOD
ONE WORLD
ONE HUMANITY

Spiritual Experiences :

........If doubts haunts the mind and lessen its purity, experiences become rare. Sudden flights of experience are possible by the Grace of God. God comes like a flood and not by slow steps. There are flights from the first storey to the second and from the second to the third, it is not climbing step. There is a steady current after the flood subsides but it is not in man's hands and one has to leave it to the sweet Will of God. One can take a flight but one must amass great merit for that......Our experience may be quite a new one. The tide comes only once in a while; our usual experience is what we should love. There is a great power even in the experience of a spiriton. Jewels drop down from its bosom, says Kannad Mystic. The physicists say that the whole world can be destroyed by the power hidden in an atom. The spiriton is a spiritual atom and the power hidden in it is unfathomable and unlimited....

(From Vachanamruta)

***

RAMA-STAVA-RAJA

(34)

वासुदेवं जगद्योनिमनदि - निधनं हरिम् ।
गोविंदं गोपतिं विष्णुं गोपी - जन - मनोहरम् ॥३४॥

(I salute Rama) who is Visnu (in the incarnation of) Vasudeva i.e. Krsna, the lord of cows (Govinda), the owner of cows and attractive to groups of cowherdesses, who is the source of the world, who is without a beginning and end, and who carries away (i.e. removes the sins of his devotees) (Hari) (34).

(35)

गो-गोपाल-परिवारं गोप-कन्या-समावृतम् ।
विद्युत्-पुंज-प्रतीकाशं रामं कृष्णं जगन्मयम् ॥३५॥

(I bow down to) Rama who is the same as Krsna whose retinue is cows and cowherds, who is surrounded by the daughters / young maidens of cowherds, who is similar to ball/mass of lightening, and who has pervaded the world (35).

(36)

गो-गोपिका-समाकीर्णं वेणु-वादन-तत्परम् ।
काम-रूपं कलावंतं कामिनी-कामदं विभुम् ॥३६॥

(I salute Rama who is the same as Krsna) who was surrounded by cows and cowherdesses, who was expert in playing upon the flute, who assumed various forms as per his wish, who fulfilled the desires of women desiring him, who possessed various arts, and who is all-pervading (36).

(37)

मन्मथं मथुरा-नाथं माधवं मकरध्वजम् ।
श्रीधरं श्रीकरं श्रीशं श्रीनिवासं परात्परम् ।।३७।।

(I salute Rama) who is the same as god Cupid whose flag is marked with a crocodile, who was lord of Mathura, who is husband of Laksmi, who possesses splendour, who makes available wealth, who is the lord of riches, who is the abode of wealth, and who is the Person (Self) higher than other persons (37).

(38)

भूतेशं भूपतिं भद्रं विभूतिं भूमि-भूषणम् ।
सर्व-दुःख-हरे वीरं दुष्ट-दानव-वैरिणम् ।।३८।।

(I salute Rama) who is the ruler of all born things, who is the lord of the earth, who is auspicious, who is excellence (vibhuti), who is an ornament to the world/earth, who removes all sorrows (or who removes sorrows of all), who is a hero, and who is an enemy of the wicked demons (38).

(39)

श्रीनृसिंहं महाबाहुं, महान्तं दीप्त-तेजसम् ।
चिदानंदमयं नित्यं प्रणवं ज्योति-रूपिणम् ।।३९।।

(I bow down to Rama) who is the same as splendorous Narasimha (Man-Lion incarnation), who had long arms, who was great, who had brilliant lustre, who is consciousness and bliss, who is eternal, who is (the same as) Pranava (Onkara), and who is of the nature of luminence (39).

(40)

आदित्य-मंडल-गतं निश्चितार्थ-स्वरूपिणम् ।
भक्ति-प्रियं पद्मनेत्रं भक्तानाभिप्सित-प्रदम् ॥४०॥

(I salute Rama) who stays in the orb of the sun, who is of the nature of fixed meaning, to whom devotion is dear, who is lotus-eyed, and who bestows desired things on his devotees (40).

(41)

कौसल्येयं कला-मूर्तिं काकुत्स्थं कमला-प्रियम् ।
सिंहासने समासीनं नित्यप्रतमकल्मषम् ॥४१॥

(I salute Rama) who is the son of Kausalya, who is arts incarnate, who is a descendant of Kakutstha, who is dear to Kamala/Laksmi, who is seated on the throne, who always observes (certain) vows, and who is stainless/sinless (41).

(42)

विश्वामित्र-प्रियं दान्तं स्व-दार-नियत-ब्रतम ।
यज्ञेशं यज्ञपुरुषां यज्ञ-पालन-तत्परम् ॥४२॥

(I bow down to Rama) who is dear to Visvamitra, who has controlled his senses, who follows the vow of being interested in his own wife, who is lord of the sacrifices, and who himself is the Person in the form of sacrifice, and who is ready to protect sacrifices (42).

(43)

सत्य-संध जित-क्रोधं शरणागत-वत्सलम ।
सर्व-क्लेशापहरणं बिभीषण-वर-प्रदम् ॥४३॥

(I salute Rama) whose vow (sandha) is always true, who has conquered his wrath, who is (always) compassionate to those who have resorted to him, who removes all afflictions, and who gave boon/s to Vibhisana (43).

(44)

दशग्रीव-हरं रौद्र केशवं केशि-मर्दनम् ।
वालि-प्रमथनं वीरं सुग्रीवेप्सित-राज्यदम् ।।४४।।

(I salute Rama) who killed Ten-faced Ravana, who was fierce, who as Kesava, i.e. Krsna killed Kesin, who destroyed Valin,who was a hero, and who bestowed on Sugriva his desired Kingdom (44).

(45)

नर-वानर-दैवश्च सेवितं हनुमन्-प्रियम ।
शुद्धं सूक्ष्मं परंशांतं तारकं ब्रह्म-रूपिणम् ।।४५।।

(I bow down to Rama) who was served by man, monkeys and gods, who was dear to Hanumant, who was pure, subtle, supreme, quiscient, saviour, and the same as Brahman (45).

(46)

सर्व-भूतात्म भूतस्थं सर्वाधारं-सनातनम् ।
सर्व-कारण-कर्तारं निदानं प्रकृतिः परम् ।।४६।।

(I salute Rama) who is the self of all beings and who resides in all beings, who is the support/basis to all, who is eternal, who is the producer (agent) of all causes, who is beyond Prakrti and who is cause (nidhana) of Prakrti (46).

(47)

निरामयं निराभासं निरवद्यं निरंजनम् ।
नित्यानंदं निराकारम द्वैतं तमसः परम् ।।४७।।

(I salute Rama) who is diseaseless, is devoid of illusion, is not blameworthy, is spotless/stainless, who is (nothing but) eternal bliss, who is formless, who is one without a second and who is beyond the darkness (in the form of ignorance) (47).

(48)

परात्परतरं तत्त्वं सत्यानंदं चिदात्मकम् ।
मनसा शिरसा नित्यं प्रणमामि रघूत्तमम् ॥४८॥

With mind and head I always salute Rama who is the Supreme Principle beyond all higher things, who is of the nature of existence (satya), bliss, and (pure) consciouness and who is the best among the descendants of Raghu (48).

(49)

सूर्य-मंडल-मध्यस्थं रामं सीता-समन्वितम् ।
नमामि पुंडरीकाक्ष मयेयं गुरू-तत्परम् ॥४९॥

I bow down to Rama who stays in the middle of the orb of the sun, who is in the company of Sita, who is lotus-eyed and immeasurable, and who is engrossed in (the service to) his teacher (49).

(50)

नमोऽस्तु वासुदेवाय ज्योतिषांप्रतये नमः ।
नमोऽस्तु रामदेवाय जगदानंद-रूपिणे ॥५०॥

Let there be salutation to Rama (in the form of) Vasudeva (=Krsna), salutations to the lord of the luminaries (in the sky), salutation to (the highest) God Rama, and salutation to Rama in the form of worldly delight (50).

(51)

नमो वेदान्त-निष्ठाय योगिने ब्रह्मवादिने ।
मायामय-निरासाय प्रपन्न-जन-सेविने ॥५१॥

(Let there be) salutation to (Rama) who is established in the Upanisads (as the highest Brahman), who is a yogin speaking or discussing about Brahman, who sublets the world consisting of illusion, and who serves i.e. favours those who surrender to him (51).

(52)

वंदामहे महेशान-चंद्र कोदंड-खंडनम ।
जानकी-हृदयानंद-वर्धनं रघुनंदनम् ॥५२॥

We (i.e. I) salute (Rama) who broke the fierce bow of Siva, who increases delight in the heart of Janaki and who delights Raghu (52).

(53)

उत्फुल्लमल-कोमलोत्पल-दल-श्यामाय-रामाय ते
कामाय प्रमदा-मनोहर-गुण-ग्रामाय रामात्मने ।
योगारूढ-मुनींद्र-मानस-सरे-हंसाय संसारवि-
ध्वंसाय स्फुरदोजसे रघुकुलोत्तंसाय पुंसे नमः ॥५३॥

I salute, (O Rama) to you who are dark like the fully opened, dustless, delicate petal of a (blue) lotus, who is the same as Cupid, who possesses a collection of virtues/qualities that attract the mind of beautiful ladies, who is of the nature of delight (ramatmane), who is the swan in the lake in the form of the mind of great sages who have mastered the Yoga, who destroys(bonds of) empirical life, whose valour is brilliant/shimmering, who is the ornament to the family of Raghu, and who is the highest Person (53).

(54)

भवोद्भवं वेदविदांवरिष्ठ -
मादित्य-चंद्रानाल-सुप्रभावम् ।
सर्वात्मकं सर्व-गत-स्वरूपं
नमामि रामं तमसः परस्नात् ॥५४॥

I salute Rama who is the creator of emipirical life, who is supreme among the knowers of the Vedas, who is very powerful/brilliant/lustrous like the sun, the moon and the fire, who is of the nature of all, whose nature/form is present in all (things), and who is beyond the darkness (in the form of ignorance) (54).

(55)

नरंजनं निष्प्रतिमं निरीहं निराश्रयं निष्कालम प्रपंचम् ।
नित्यं ध्रुवं निर्विषम-स्वरूपं निरंतरं राममहं भजामि ।।५५।।

I surrender or resort to Rama who is spotless, uneuqalled, devoid of longing, without (any other) basis or support, partless, devoid of empirical life, eternal, permanent, of the nature of absence of sensual objects, and who is continuous (i.e. continuously existent) (55).

Notes :

34. Here Rama is said to be the same as Krsna who reared the cows and attracted cowherdesses, when he was staying in Gokula and Vrndavana.

35. When Krsna was staying in the house of Nanda in Vraja, the cows, cowherds and cowherd-maidens were his companions. The word 'jaganmaya' can mean 'containing the world', as the word rests in Rama (see verse No. 9).

36. Krsna is said to have assumed many forms and fulfilled the various desires of cowherdesses who loved him. The word 'Kama-rupa' can also mean 'one who was of the form of Cupid(Kama)' (See Verse No. 37).

37. The word 'Mathura-natha' refers to Krsna who sometime stayed in Mathura, but he was not the king of Mathura. The word 'Sri' means Laksmi, splendour, riches, wealth. The word 'parat para' indicates the highest Self that is superior to individual souls.

39. Narsimha was an incarnation of Visnu prior to Rama. For 'cidanandmaya', see verse No. 32. For 'jyotirupinam', see Verse No. 22.

40. Upanisads often speak of the ultimate reality as staying in the orb of the sun. Rama as the highest real resides in the sun.

41. Kakutstha was one of the ancestors of Rama. The word 'Kamala-priya' can also mean 'to whom Kamala is dear'

42. For Visvamitra, see Verse No. 19 supra.

43. Vibhisana (also spelt as Bibhisana) was younger brother of Ravana, the king of Lanka. He himself has joined the side of Rama. Rama had given him boons.

44. Dasagriva is Ravana, who is said to have ten necks, i.e. faces. Rama killed him as Ravana had abducted Sita, Rama's wife. Kesin was demon-partisan of Kamsa (Krsna's maternal uncle). He had come to Vraja to kill Krsna who himself destroyed him. Valin was the king of Monkeys. Sugriva was his younger brother. Valin had banished Sugriva from his kingdom. Rama made friendship with Sugriva and for his sake he killed Valin, and gave the kingdom to Sugriva.

45.Hanumant was a monkey and a minister of Sugriva. After coming to know Rama he became an ardent devotee of Rama. The word 'Hanumant-priyam' can be rendered as 'to whom Hanumant was dear'. The words in the second line of this stanza refer to various aspects of Rama as the highest reality Brahman.

46. All the words point out the supreme nature of Rama. Prakrti is the inanimate principle.

47. Here Rama is described as the Highest Reality.

49 Stanzas Nos. 27 to 48 were taken together, as the verb 'pranamami' occured in Verse No. 48 only. This praise of Rama is continued by Narada in Verses Nos. 49-54, wherein the word 'salutation' is separately mentioned in each verse.

In verse No. 49, the teacher of Rama would be obviously the sage Vasistha.

50. The word 'jagadananda-rupine' shows that the worldly delight is an insignificant part of Brahmananda.

51. The word 'Vedanta (=end of Vedas) means Upanisads which constitute the concluding portions of Vedas.

52. In the Self-choice of Sita, Ramah ad broken the big bow of Sankara.

53. Rama's body was dark like a blue lotus.

55-66. In this group of verses, Narada in Verses Nos. 55-59, 61-62 and 65-66 says that he surrenders or resorts to Rama, while in Verses Nos. 60, and 63-64 he says that he salutes Rama. Seeing the trend of the verses, the verb 'namami' (I salute) can be rendered as 'bhajami' (I resort to).

55. The world is full of various sensual objects. Rama as the ultimate reality has nothing to do with the empirical life containing sensual objects. So Rama's nature is here said to be devoid of sensual objects. The word'nirantara' can be construed with 'bhajami'. Then the meaning would be : I constantly resort to.

(To be continued..........)

Prof. Dr. K. V. Apte,

Yajurved Appts., ST Colony, Vishrambag, Sangli-416415.

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(Continued from Jan.-Mar. '08 issue)

Eternity Compressed in Time :

MY REMINISCENCES OF SHRI GURUDEVA

Continuing the topic of Perpetual Flux as an incentive to spiritual life, Shri Gurudeva refers to the poetic Doha :क्षणभंगुर जीवनकी कलिका ? It furnishes a good illustration of the momentariness of all things. We are told in this Doha that just as we are not quite sure a bud of this evening will blossom into a flower tommorrow, so we do not know whether the bud of life will blossom into a veritable living being. Shri Gurudeva points out that similarly we cannot be sure whether the foetus in a mother's womb may be born as a child or come out still dead. All things are transitory. 'The sleep, which a man is enjoying on a particular night, might also mean Biblical sleep or death.' The poet further goes on to ask whether the cool and fragrant breeze, which is blowing today from the Malaya mountain, the abode of sandal trees, will continue to blow tomorrow. It may be that the breeze might stop altogether. The poet tells us that the God of Death (Kali-Purusha) has his empire everywhere. Recalling the incidents narrated in the Bhagawata

Purana, Shri Gurudeva tells us that the Kali-Purusha appeared before King Parikshit in order to kill religion, but Parikshit succeeded in limiting his activities to speres like drinking, gambling, and so on. When the same Kali-Purusha will appear before you, you will have to consider whether your tender body will be able to bear the blow. 'Beware, therefore, betimes,' says the poet, 'begin to think about God even today.' Shri Gurudeva here recalls the famous Sanskrit verse रात्रिर्गभिष्यति भविष्यति सुप्रभातं which tells us how the bee, pent up inside a lotus flower at night, had to meet its doom along with the lotus plant itself, when the lotus plant was uprooted by an elephant in the early hours of the morning. The poet therefore, addresses the tongue thus, 'Even now, Oh tongue, begin to utter the Name of the God, for thou dost not know whether thou wilt be able to move at all at the time of death.' (Pathway to God in Hindi Literature, pp. 310-11).

After considering the incentive of perpetual flux, Shri Gurudeva comes to the next incentive concerning decrepitude and destruction. The three Dohas involving this incentive given below imply an increasing 'Nirveda":

1) पाकि गए कड्डु वाय,
2) कौन खाड मैं हाड
3) अगत पजरता देखि कै कब़िरा भया उदास

The first Doha "कच्चे में नीका लगै" is a riddle a paheli, where certain questions are asked, and solutions sought. In this Doha, the poet asks, "What is that fruit which is.likedwhen it is raw, which tastes extremely delicious when it comes to a half ripe condition, and which becomes bitter when it fully ripens ? " The solution of the riddle, of course is that the fruit is the human body. Shri Gurudeva explains that when a person is in his childhood, he is liked by everybody, in youth he becomes the object of ardent love and in old age he is the target of hatred for everybody. In fact, the process from childhood through youth to old age might be summerized in three words - liked, loved and hated. This is the first stage of Nirveda.

In the second Doha, "कहँ जाये, कहँ अने कहाँ लडाए लाड" five states of existence are enumerated, the last state leading to further stage of Nirveda. "Have you considered, Oh man," asks the Doha, "How you first came into your mother's womb, and then you came out of it. (This is indeed the second birth according to the Upanishad-........). In your third stage, you became an object of endearment for everybody and were consequently fondled.

Later in youth, you reached the zenith of your prosperity and power, and after having done all this, your ultimate fate is to be consigned as a mere mass of bones into a ravine, creek, or river. This should fill you with the consideration as to whether you have given a proper account of your life." Shri Gurudeva here recalls what Kabir has told elsewhere, "अपने खातिर महल बनाया । आपहि जा कर जंगल सोया ।।

The practice in northern India unlike that in southern India, is very often to throw the dead body in a ravine, creek, or river. We may compare also the practice among the Zoroastrians of exposing their dead bodies to kites and vultures in the Tower of Silence. Having risen to the height of power and prosperity, says the Doha, your ultimate fate is to descend into a ravine as a mass of mere bones.

Shri Gurudeva asks, "What happened in the case of the great Emperors of Delhi ? Humayun had to lie in his secluded tomb at Delhi. Akbar was born on the way to Mecca, but was ultimately buried in Secundra. Jahangir ruled at Agra, but his bones were buried at Lahore. Shahajahan, the great Moghul Emperor, in his last days, had to be interned, and buried by the side of his beloved Mumtaj. Aurangzeb, in his power, vanity, and glory, having ruled the major part of India from Delhi to Deccan, had to die at Ahmednagar, and his bones had to be removed and buried at Aurangabad. Such is the fate reserved even for great Emperors. This is Nirveda at the second stage.

The Nirveda reaches its peak when Kabir says in his Doha, "At the time of the cremation of your body, your bones will burn like wood, and your hair will glow like burning grass." Kabir saw the whole world afire, and was filled with consternation and concern as to how to escape both burial and cremation, and reach a permanent state of existence, which would be beyond the pale of both.

Shri Gurudeva tells us that philosophers who have sought spiritual life are of three kinds, namely, the sad philosopher, the weeping philosopher, and the shouting philosopher. As is evident from his Doha discussed above, Kabir belonged to the first category. He is filled to the brim with sadness when he sees the whole world on fire : जगत पजरता देखि कै कबिरा भया उदास Tukaram and Ramdas may be described as the weeping and the shouting philosophers respectively. There is a story connected with these two saints of Maharashtra, which might be briefly mentioned here. It has been reported that Tukaram and Ramdas met only once during their lifetime and that too, on the opposite banks of Bhima at Pandharpur. As Ramdas, with his band of disciples, was coming from the other side of the river, Tukaram went with his disciples from the side of Pandharpur to receive him. Tukaram began to weep, and Ramdas began to shout. Not knowing the reasons for these strange acts of their spiritual teachers, their disciples asked them what prompted them to act so strangely. Tukaram said that he was telling the world with tears in his eyes that they should leave away their futile mundane persuits and follow God, and nobody listened to him. Ramdas said that he was shouting to the world that the course they were following was a vain one, and nobody listened to him also. "Of what value would be your tears? asked Ramdas to Tukaram when they met. "My very shouts and howls are drowned in the hue and cry, which people raise in their bustle of life." Shri Gurudeva continues, "We have spoken about Kabir as being sad philosopher, Tukaram a weeping philosopher, and Ramadas as a shouting philosopher and yet none of these characteristics would ultimately belong to these great saints.

Behind the semblance with which they approached humanity for its spirirual upliftment, there was the attitude of a potent Beatifism which was the very core of their being. (Pathway to God in Hindi Literature, pp.314-15).

(To be continued..........)

Prof.M. L. Sharma,
115, Malviya Nagar, Jodhpur-342 011, Rajasthan.

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(Continued from last issue.....)

GOD REALISATION THE SUMMUM BONUM OF HUMAN LIFE

The Eight Mystical Emotions :

As a man advances in his mystical experience, he exhibits various kinds of physiological, physio-psychological reactions, which have been classified by writers on Alankara Sastra as well as on mysticism into a number of prominent emotional features. They are generally regarded to be eight Sattvika Bhavas; but it is not necessary that there should be only eight. There might be many more; and even in regard to the eight there is no consensus of opinion among various writers on the science of emotions. On the whole therefore, we may say that the following are the chief mystical emotions that a man exhibits in his spiritual development. Physiologically, we might say, the symptoms which a mystic develops are horripilation, perspiration and lachrymation, this last being particularly due to feelings inside the mind. Then there are physio-psychological reactions such as tremor and paresis. These two are opposed to each other and yet the mystic develops them both and exhibits them at different times. As regards the psychological reactions, we have epoche, peace and joy. Paresis physiologically produces epoche psychologically. Consequently, epoche is equivalent and conducive to peace, while opposed to peace is joy, and the great beauty of psychological reaction to mystical experience is that antithetical qualities become mingled together. On the whole therefore, the eight different mystical emotions which man enjoys on his spiritual march are horripilation, perspiration, lachrymation, tremor, paresis, epoche, peace and joy. (BG 58/59).

iii) Spiritual Summun Bonum :

Spiritual Summun Bonum consists in liberation, beatification and infinitude. Please refer detailed treatment on these in chapter VII.

A Word about Gurudev's style of writing :

From the various published works of Gurudev we have selected passage put forth by him about the Ultimate Reality and arranged them in an ascending order bringing out the pathway one has to tread in his quest for Truth.

Before we describe the pathway proper, it is very important to note the characteristics of his writings. The foremost is silence about himself. He speaks through the mouth of others. He has used the device, no doubt of hiding himself behind the sayings and spiritual poems of the sages and saints that he culled out and employed for illustrating various aspects under consideration of his particular work. This may be that, it should appear, that whatever he has written was already there as the precious treasure of all those who had gone before him, and that he himself was only a mouthpiece of them. An intelligent reader of Gurudev works will however discover that there is something more than this. He will read between the lines and find out Gurudev's presence there. He has used the opinions of various sages and saints to support his own conclusions about spiritual life to which he arrived through meditation and contemplation on the Name and the vision of God respectively. He has seperated poetry from real utterances of God realization based on his own experiences. In fact he has not quoted a single spiritual experience of other sages and saints of which he was not recipient.

Another way to remain in the background was to give sources from original texts when expounding a doctrine thus attributing the views to the original writers. These sources have served the purpose of making his writings highly authentic. The systematization displayed in culling out sources is the genesis of method of construction through critical exposition.

Gurudev says that the style of his writing adopted in various works thus, " ....I have not discussed them (incentives) in my book (Maharashtra Mysticism) on that subject from that point of view I have given there an analytical and not a synthetical survey of the teachings of the great Maharashtra saints. You might remember that such subjects are capable of both kinds of treatment, the analytical and the synthetical. I have followed both these methods in the case of Upanishadic philosophy. I have followed the analytical method in the case of the 'Creative Period of Indian Philosophy' which I wrote in collaboration with Dr. Belvalkar, and the synthetical method in my work 'A constructive survey of the Upanishadic philosophy' which I wrote independently. Of these two methods, the synthetical one is, of course better. So I have chosen this one in the case of Hindi mysticism as well as in the case of Karnataka Mysticism. (PGKL 33/34).

Coming to the pathway of God realization, to attain to the highest ideal of God Realization, the aspirant has to pass through five stages. These are,
a) Incentive to spiritual Life - the turning point involving emotional preparation.
b) Moral Preparation - by exercising his will the aspirant has to cultivate virtues and cast off vices.
c) Relation between Saints and God - this is intellectual preparation. The aspirant is rationally convinced about the supreme value of his goal by acquiring knowledge about Saints and God.
d) Pilgrimage - Intuitional preparation involves initiation from a Master and trodding of path as per His instructions.
e) Crowning Phase - Mystical Experiences :- Here the aspirant starts obtaining the fruits of his turmoil and trouble when his efforts are fructified by visions of God.

These are not water tight compartments. Division indicates main event and development stage of the aspirant. As he advances on his pilgrimage visions of God serve as further incentives he attains more moral perfection. Acquires first hand knowledge about God vis-a-vis his spiritual teacher, all this leading to further progress on his path. Subsequently this leads to more vision of God, and the entire process becomes an auspicious circle acquiring velocity both by aspirant's ascending efforts and God's descending grace.

For Gurudev, God Realisation is a process and not an event. The devotee approaches the Reality in an asymptotic way, establishing approximation between himself and the Reality on his pathway. God-Realisation comes as a mystical experience to the aspirant.

2.1) Mysticism Defined :

"Mysticism for Gurudev is a way of spiritual life which binds all humanity toether" (PGKL-1).

If the teachings of different philosophies and religions are discerned of their propoundment for the attainment of God, it will be found that essentially the same kind of teaching pervades them all.

Gurudev defines "Mysticism denotes that attitude of mind which involves a direct, immediate, first hand, intuitive apprehension of God". It is highest attitude of which man is capable, namely a restful and loving contemplation of God. It is a silent enjoyment of God. (MMP-1)

Mysticism implies a silent enjoyment of God. It is in this sense that mystical experience has been often regarded ineffable (ibid).

The word "Mysticism" itself comes down to us from the Greeks and is derived from a root meaning "to close". The derivation of the word was later held to give it the meaning of closing the mind to the influence of all external things, so that it might be withdrawn into itself, and so be fitted to receive the Divine Illumination.

It is indeed the eternal cry of the human soul for rest; the insatiable longing of a being where in the infinite ideals are fettered and cramped by a miserable actuality.

of the aspiration of the soul to cease altogether from self and to be at once with God.

Mysticism, therfore is not be regarded as a religion in itself, but rather as the most vital element in all true religions. It is to be described rather as an attitude of mind; an innate tendency of the human soul, which seeks to transcend reason and to attain to a direct experience of God and which believes that it is possible for the human soul to be united with Ultimate Reality, when 'God ceases to be an object and becomes an experience'. Mysticism has been defined as "the immediate feeling of the unity of the self with God-it is religious life at the very heart and center. It is the endeavour to fix the immediateness of the life in God as such-in this God intoxication, in which the self and the world are alike together, the subject knows himself to be in possession of the highest and fullest truth (UM-20/21).

The mystics of all ages and countries have spoken the same language, as they are denizens of the same spiritual world. There are no racial, no communal, no national prejudices among them. Time and Space have nothing to do with the eternal and infinite character of their mystical experience. These together constitute a band of divine musicians, each contributing his own note, and all together producing a harmony that is wonderful. (PGHL-GI-2). Mystical experience has served to make all God-aspiring humanity a common and hidden society, the laws of which are known to themselves if at all. We may even say, that they are known only to God, and not even to them (MM P-2).

2.2) The Characteristics of Mysticism.

Mysticism is intuitive, it is centrally initiated and super-sensuous in nature. We shall consider each characteristic in detail.

2.a) Intuition :- Mysticism is the philosophy of God-realization, which implies and involves the faculty of intuition. According to mystics intuition is a faculty of super-sensuous experience which is aroused in us by proper spiritual initiation and practice.

Physiologically, we might say that the faculty of intuition is concerned with what might be called central instead of peripheral initiation. It is not the external or outside sense- experience that counts; it is the experience that is generated inside us in our intuitional process, that is in the process of following the path of God, that matters. So intuition is something which transcends intellect, feeling and will. It has got a physiological support in what purports to be central initiation (PGKL-3).

It has been very often supposed that, for mystical experience, no separate faculty like intuition need be requisitioned, but that intellect, feeling and will might suffice to enable us to have a full experience of God. Now it is a matter of common knowledge that even for heights to be reached in artistic, scientific or poetic activity, a certain amount of direct immediate, intuitive contact with Reality is required. Far more is this the case in the matter of mystical experience. Intuition far from contradicting, intelligence, feeling or will, does penetrate and lie at the back of them all. Intuition will not deny to mysticism a title to philosophy, if intellect requires it. As it connotes a determinative effort towards the acquisition of Reality; it implies a definite prolonged and continuous exercise of the will. As feeling brings the subject and the object into more intimate contact than any other psychological process, it also becomes a vital part of the process of realiation. Thus it seems that intelligence, will and feeling are all-necessary in the case of mystical endeavour. Only intuition must back them all. (PGHL-GI 2/3).

It (Mysticism) maintains that the soul can see and perceive with that spiritual sense of which St. Augustine speaks, which penetrates through the veils of matter and perceives the Light Unchangeable. This is that inner sense which is called intuition, by which he perceives things hidden from reason, through which he is brought into a conscious fellowship and unity, with God. It is a spiritual sense opening inwardly, as the physical senses open outwardly, and because it has the capacity to perceive, grasp and know the truth at first hand, independent of all external sense of information, we call it intuition (UM-21).

As philosophers our business is to philosophise, logicise and give arguments that will satisfy reason. Intuition is realization of God without logicing. Ordinary deduction is useless. So too is ordinary 'direct' because it is only physiological in character. The real criterion is intuitive perception in the state of unison with unitive 'direct' (experience) and deduction resulting there from as subservient to intuitive perception. (VICT P 73).

A slight detour from our subjet to inspect the today's status of INTUITION, we feel necessary, to highlight the turn that thinking humanity is taking in the right direction.

In place such as the Naropa Institute in Boulder, Colorado, and the Academy of Conscious Studies in Princeton University, intuition's inside story is told and listened to. Both the institutes named above undertook a collaborative project and have published the book "Intuition the Inside Story" (Interdisciplinary Perspectives).

In the Forward to his book Jeremy Hayward of the Naropa Institute writes, "How different our world might become if the education of scientist, doctors, academics, business professionals and even lawyers included listening to the heart songs of intuition as weilding the sharp sword of intellect....Joining intellect and intuition, head and heart, mind and body; this is the key to an authentic human life and good human society. Loving-kindness toward others follows naturally when we are in harmony within ourselves (Exactly a mystical attitude-thesis writer)...There are methods, such as the increasingly well known and understood method of mindfulness - awareness, that can help us relax our inner chatter and listen to the voice of intuition with the still, calm, clarity of true intellect".

We shall end this detour after giving three selected excerpts from the book. The book has two parts. Part I deals with the nature of intuition and Part II intuition, science and praxis".

i) Marcie Boucouvalas in her article "Intuition : The Concept and the experience" (Part - I) writes, Intuition represents a way of direct knowing that seeps into conscious awareness without conscious mediation of logic and the rational process what is claimed here is a way of knowing outside the conscious/rational/logical/analytic process.. the source is a direct apprehension that lies outside sensory channels and analytic thought (I-7).

Cappan states "If logical reasoning and scientific analysis have brought knowledge to the crown of human intelligence, then intuition and its inseparable twin, creativity form the jewel in the crown " (I-11).

ii) Brenda J. Dunne in her "Subjectivity and Intuition in the Scientific Method" observes, "The true practice of science, like that of any *spiritual discipline* (italics by thesis writer), requires a profound sense of humility and dedication, balanced by a mastery of technique.... The great intuitive leaps of insight, wherin inputs of apparently disparate bits of information randomly percolate below the surface of awareness, constantly re-arranging themselves and eventually surfacing in a new meaningful pattern, require the *spiritual detachment* (italics by thesis writer) that only comes from self examination......It (intuition) is in a very real sense, *mystical experience* but not one that is beyond the realm of science. On the contrary, as Albert Einstein (quoted in Barnett 1979 : 108) observed "it is the sower of all true science".

Superficially, application of the scientific method, with its insistence on strict objectivity, to this mystical domain of ultimate subjectivity -self examination - may appear to present a formidable challenge.....(I 127).

iii) Bob Harbort in his article "Thought Action" and Intuition in Practice Oriented Disciplines" writes "......Intuition is a central part of humans' ways of thinking in a number of contexts (Heschel 1955 : 14) A key to furthering our understanding of how we use intuition is to distinguish between "local" and "global" intuitive contexts. Local intuition may be thought of as generalization based on individuality. Global intuition on the other hand is based on the assertion that "....there is a transcedent meaning to the universe independent of our comprehension......." (Heschel 1955 : 06). It is this global intuition that finally allows us to transcend our individuality and relate our values and our concerns to the human community in which we exist". (I 140).

For Albert Einstein once said,

"A human being is a part of the whole called by
"universe", a part limited in time and space.
He experiences himself, his thoughts and feelings
as something separated from the rest -a kind
of optical delusion of his consciousness". (I 82)

Coming back to the characteristics of mysticism we turn to second characteristic viz. Central initiation.

(To be continued........)

Dr. **N. V. Kulkarni,**
B.E., M. Phil., Ph. D.,
Ahaya, 27, Savali Society,
Paud Road, PUNE-411 038. Phone : (020) 5435358

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A God-realiser becomes endowed with illimitable power. Saints like Shri Maharaj know that the Vastu (form of God) is the ultimate Reality and it has all the powers of Divinity. They also know that they themselves share the powers of Vastu and in this way they realise that the Vastu is the Karta (doer) and that they themselves are the Karta also.

- Gurudev Ranade.

WAY TO SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE

The greatest research ever carried out anywhere in the world was done by the ancient sages in India, on how to attain Godhood through development of one's own mental faculties, hitherto unknwn to mankind. Not only did they discover the Science of Yoga, but also found the process by which one's individual mind can get attached to the universal mind, which they called '*Mahat*'. Once this is achieved, the secrets of the universe get revealed. Discoveries of modern science pale into insignificance before this scientific effort of the sages, carried out with a researcher's zeal. They analysed the individual mind, discovered its unknown faculties and found out the pathway to God Realisation.

It is the mind that is responsible for all the activities of the individual. It is the mind that directs the brain to put the body into action through the nervous system. It is the mind that goads a man to become a learned person, a devotee of God, a social worker, an evil doer or a reckless ruffian. Sage *Vasistha* says, "The doer and enjoyer of all the happiness, unhappiness and fanciful ideas, is the mind and the mind alone. Therefore recognise that the mind is the essence of man, nay, the man himself". Thus it is essential to know one's mind to know oneself.

The power of the mind is limitless. Why not channelise this power of the mind in the right direction? This thought deeply engrossed the attention of the sages. The mind is the driver of the body vehicle and to utilise its power one should be in a position to control and direct the mind itself. To get this directional control of mind, one has to divest the mind of its usual worldly desires, ambitions and ego and make it learn to remain still and concentrate, to develop its power. In Bhagwadgeeta, *Shrikrishna* Says, *"Manmana Bhava Madyaji Bhava"* meaning thereby that one should divest one's mind of all other thoughts and concentrate on Him alone.

The great saint of Maharashtra, *Samarth Ramdas Swami* directly advises the mind in his "Manache Sloka" (Advice to the mind) stressing the importance of the mind in human existence. He says that one should follow the path of devotion, which is the easiest way to attain Him as it is in His very nature to reach His devotee. At the same time, he exhorts the mind to forsake all the evil deeds and dedicate oneself to good deeds.The mind should give up all desires which is the cause of births and rebirths. The mind should give away the temptations of wealth and women. The saint thus advises the mind to divest itself of all worldly desires in order to concentrate itself on Him and Him alone. That is the way to develop the limitless power of the mind.

The saint then indicates a stage of mind higher than the stillness and single point concentration. He asks the mind to use its power of discrimination and withdraw from the gross body to enjoy the state of being "without the gross body". This is a state akin to death but without actually dying. In this state, the mind takes away the consciousness from the gross body and enters the subtle body. What is this subtle body? It is the body of ethereal material created by the mind itself to express its own personality. Some people, therefore, prefer to call it the mental body. In this state, the mind enjoys many Supernatural powers like telepathy, television, clairvoyance and others. The eyes do not need the light of the sun to see, the sight can pierce through obstacles, nor the ears need the air-acivated drums to hear. That is why *Samarth Ramdas Swami* asks the mind to withdraw from the gross body and enjoy the state of the ethereal body. When the mind goes into the ethereal body, the mind supplies the minimum energy to the gross body to keep it alive. The mind may remain in such a state for a few seconds, a few minutes or more according to the ability of the person, who has obtained the directive control over the mind.

The great clairvoyant person, Madame Blavatsky, the founder of the Theosophical Society, also said that the Universe, beyond the gross Universe is vast and one should strive to see it.

How the mind attains these Supernatural powers? When it withdraws from the gross body, it gets attached to the Universal Mind and derives the super powers from it. When an individual mind gets attached to the Universal Mind, the man is overwhelmed with amazement and is unable to know what has happened. The overwhelming experience is described by a saint as "The ant has flown to the skies". An invisible spark from the individual flies out and goes high up in the sky so high, that the man is unable to see it. It happens to a man whose mind is divested of all worldly thoughts and has a firm base in the *Yama* (moral discipline) and *Niyama* (Mental discipline) as enunciated by sage *Patanjali*. It is a recognition of the highly developed soul by the Almighty. He is a person specially blessed by the Almighty. Once this happens, *Sri Krisna's* promise in Bhagwadgeeta *"Yoga Kshema Vahamyaham"* (I lookafter the well being) comes true for such a person. He becomes fearless and does whatever duty is assigned by the Almighty through Himself, through a Deity, a Benevolent Soul or through his own Guru. About such a person, *Samarth Ramdas Swami* says, "Nobody, in the whole of the universe, can afford to be enimical to such a person" (because he is now under the powerful protection of the Almighty Himself).

All this is possible, through human efforts and determination. The Guru initiates a disciple or an aspirant into the spiritual path by giving *"Mantra - japa"* or something else. But shaking out the dross of desires and imbibing the essential virtues is to be done by the aspirant or disciple through his own initiative and effort and cannot be done by Guru's blessings alone.

-P. D. Dharwarkar,
Member, Editorial Board,
188, Guruwar Peth, Tilakwadi,
Belgaum-590 006.
Ph. : (0831) 4213297, Mob. : 9900 881 987.

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LISTEN O SRI HARI TO THE SUPPLICATION OF A LAD

बालन बिन्नहवनु आलिसै

(The Kannada poem composed by Sri Lingappa Basappa Savalgi in the Devanagari Script)

बालन बिन्नहवनु आलिसै श्रीहरिये ।
अपराध साविर सरसिनिंदपहरिसो सागर ।।प ।।

होट्टेय किच्चिनिंद, बिट्टु निन्न ना बंदे ।
श्रेष्ठनाद धिट्ट गुरु श्रीवेंकटेशने ।।१ ।।

कंदन हणियोळु कुंदण हरळिट्टि ।
सुंदरवाद गोंबेय आडेंदु कोट्टि ।।२ ।।

नन्न शरीर बिच्चि मच्चि माडि निन्न पादके ।
इडलिच्च्छिसुवे ना उमंदीदेवेशने ।।३ ।।

Listen *O Sri Hari* to the supplication of a lad;
The Ocean delectably cleansing our sins in legions;
Listen *O Sri Hari* to the supplication of a lad.

Deserting you, *Sri Guru Venkatesha*, the imperious one,
I turned my back, owing to the stomach burn;
Listen *O Sri Hari* to the supplication of a lad.

Adorning the forehead with the *Kundan - Crystal,*
You gave away, to play with, a beautiful doll;
Listen *O Sri Hari* to the supplication of a lad.

Earnestly, I wish to tear my body apart,
And surrender it at your feet, to be your footwear
O Umadidevesha;
Listen *O Sri Hari* to the supplication of a lad.

Transcreated by :
Prof. **Yashwant Achar,**
H. No. 45, Heerabagh, Bannanje, Udupi.
e-mail : yashwanthgpr@yahoo.com

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It is not the saints who perform miracles but it is rather God who performs them for the saint. His power soreads around simply because he has led a life of merit. Or again, as Shri Maharaj used to say, the miraculous powers are harmful to real knowledge. But the great God sometimes does bring about miracles through his devotees, for the sake of glorifying Bhakti (devotion).

-Gurudev Ranade.

MYSTICAL MOBILITY

A movement from one position to another is known as mobility. Mobility takes various forms and one among them is vertical mobility. Vertical mobility stands for a movement between positions of unequal status. The two possibilities in vertical mobility are : upward and downward. Upward mobility implies a movement from a lower position to a higher position. By contrast, downward mobility is a movement from a higher position to a lower position. No doubt, much is heard about upward mobility (ascent), downward mobility (descent) in spiritual or mystical domain. But there seems to be no systematic attempt to present various aspects of the same. Hence, this paper delves into different dimensions of spiritual ascent and descent in a lucid manner.

However, an exploration of crucial facets of mystical mobility becomes possible only after paying due attention to the subject of stability in spiritual experiences for without it no spiritual ascent is possible and spiritual descent largely, though not wholly, rests upon disappearance or fainting of mystical experiences[1]. Gurudev R. D. Ranade's insightful observations on continuity in mystical experiences are worthy of consideration and they are as follows :

Once on the topic of stability in spiritual experiences the interesting conversation was held at Nimbal between Mr. Gordon - then the collector of Bijapur and Gurudev. Mr. Gordon asks, "You hold that the vision of God is permanent. But the Western mystic Plotinus says that he had the vision of God 3 or 4 times. Which then is truth"? Gurudev replied, "The God-vision of Plotinus was like a temporary flash. Its duration was short. It was not yet permanently established. It all depends on the stage one has reached. This permanence is something which cannot be explained by word of mouth. One may have the vision of *Maruti* once in a while; but what is really important is that the vision should become permanent (*Vide* Ranade 2004 : 66).

While expounding the devotional song composed by Sri Bhagavantappa, Gurudev explains, "How many people are there who can say that they are stable in their spiritual experience ? They get some experience sometime, but it does not stay long and become steady" (Ranade 1960 : 112).

In 1941, Gurudev himself explains that the spiritual experiences that he had about two and half decades ago are constant. This is what is meant by *sthitaprajna* in the spiritual experiences. There can be increase in the spiritual experiences but not decrease (Tulpule 1965 : 151).

On the whole, Gurudev takes the stand that spiritual experiences must not be discontinuous. This continuity is also attended by the process of growth. We should not be idle or rest content with the intuitive experience we have; that experience must grow from day to day and year to year (Ranade 1960 : 3-4, *Vide* for details Ranade 1959 : 233).

Hereafter, I dwell on some important facets of spiritual ascent. From the standpoint of the rate of speed, spiritual ascent can take place in two important ways: *Vihangam* (a bird) *Marga*[2], *Pipilika Marga*[3]. *Vihanga Marga* means recapitulation of the spiritual experiences of previous births within a very short span of time. By *Pipilika Marga* is meant a gradual way of attaining spiritual experiences in this life (*Vide* for details Tulpule 1965 :264). In this regard, Gurudev's reflections on Mirabai's poem are as below :

"..........Meera Bai tells that a spiritual experience once attained becomes the capital which by its use gives us compound interest and goes on increasing day after day. .... It is in fact a geometrical progression in spiritual experience about which Mirabai is speaking. To add a cubit to our spiritual stature, we know, involves infinite labour. Geo-physicists talk of the Himalayas as adding to their stature by two feet per year. Not less difficult is the process of adding to our spiritual stature except by continuous labour and infinite pains. While a mere climber can attain to the heights only through a long process of tortuous ascents, it is devotion alone which can carry us aloft at once like an aeroplane, the rate of speed being determined by the quality of heart (Ranade 1997 : 229-30).

In spiritual life mere quantity is not sufficient, quality is really required; but to have quality, quantity is essential (Tulpule 1965 :219). Elsewhere Gurudeo points out, "Really God-realisation does not depend upon prolonged

Sadhana. We cannot be sure of having the vision of God after performing *Nama-japa* for 25 crores of times. God-realisation requires tenderness of heart and intense hunger for it. When these are present, God is near (Sangoram, Deshpande 1978 :325, *Vide* for details, Ranade 1957 :238).

Further, Gurudeo opines that forms of spiritual experience[4] ....reveal themselves before the advancing mystic ....These signs carry us gradulally to higher and higher levels, until the way is opened for us, for a union with God (Ranade 1997 : 220-21). It would not be out of place here to refer to Gurudeo's doctrine of asymptotic approximation.

An asymptote is defined as a straight line always approaching but never meeting a curve in finite distance or meeting the curve at infinity. Similarly the *Sadhaka* on his spiritual pathway goes on coming closer and closer to God as he pursues the path and meets God at infinity (*Vide* for details Kulkarni 1986 : 80-82).

Now, I focus on spiritual descent both in terms of its speed with which it can happen and the rising chances from the fall. As spiritual and moral developments go hand in hand, the great saints have given, time and again, the sound note of warning to the spiritual aspirants that they may lose their mystical experiences, if they lose their morality. For instance, according to the Saint of Nimbargi, "......We should not be proud of our spiritual experiences. Those who are willing to lose them may indulge in pride" (Sangoram, Deshpande 1978 : 20). Endorsing the view of the Saint of Nimbargi, Gurudeo[5] says that he has seen instances of men, who having had the spiritual experience, lost it on account of their fall. Besides, Gurudeo unhesitatingly tells us that it is much better not to have the experience at all than to see it and lose it (Ranade 1960 : 224).

Let me devote to certain instances where chances of recovery after their spiritual fall are bright and of those which are remote or even impossible.

The Saint of Umadi reiterates that after exerting spiritual efforts, some *Sadhakas* will be blessed with mystical experiences. But they begin to reveal their mystical experiences to others. On account of this pride, their mystical experiences disappear. It is like the growth of the onion (*allium sepa*) plant beneath the *Tulsi (Ocymum Sanctum)* plant. As these *Sadhakas* lose their mystical experiences, they get frightened and once again perform *Sadhana* and with the result they regain their lost experiences (Kulkarni 2005 :182)

Followers and close associates of Nimbargi *Sampradaya* know that Sadhubuva initiated some spiritual aspirants like the Saint of Umadi at the instance of the Saint of Nimbargi. According to the Saint of Umadi, one of his spiritual brothers climbed three steps and then slipped. However, Sadhubuva's great spiritual power rescued[6] that fallen disciple (Kulkarni 1995 : 387).

I turn to the elaboration of two instances of spiritual descent where the chances of recovery are more or less remote.

I have come across a *Sadhaka* of Nimbargi *Sampradaya* who narrated his own experience with sadness. This *Sadhaka* had the wonderful and rare mystical experiences in his childhood. The spiritual teacher of this *Sadhaka* instructed him not to get up from bed without completing half an hour meditation. On one occasion he did not follow the instruction and that day onwards he does not have even one tenth of mystical experiences of what he had before. He regrets very much over the state of affair and now his mind thirsts for those previous mystical experiences (Dabade 1998 :151).

One of the disciples of the Saint of Umadi is Madappa. Madappa had the full spiritual experience of his own form (*Swarupa*). Once there was an acute shortage of food owing to famine. Hence, he approached his spiritual teacher. His spiritual teacher said, "God is in front of you. Ask Him". But Madappa replied, " 'It' stands silently like a ghost. What does 'It' give? " As Madappa showed disrespect to his own spiritual form, he did not live long and died soon (*Vide* for details Kulkarni 1995 :421-22).

The last incident reminds us of the most penetrating statements made by Kabir and Amburao Maharaj, i.e., the advanced mystics are most likely to bite the dust if they are not cautious enough while treading on spiritual pathway.

Kabir asserts, ".....to be called a *Sadhu* is not a simple matter. You must be able to ascend the date-palm of existence. He alone, who can ascend to the top of the date palm can partake of the nectary juice of its palms. If he fails in reaching the top, he will shatter himself to pieces " (Ranade 1997 :220-30).

Quite frequently, Amburao Maharaj used to bring to the notice of the spiritual aspirants that those who have made enough spiritual progress have to take utmost care because if at all spiritual descent takes place, it would take place at a rapid speed and in that it may be possible to have complete destruction of all the things. To make the matter more intelligible, he draws attention to a simile, of a drawing pot full of water to the top from a well. More the height is reached, greater the care is to be exercised. If the pot (full of water) reaches the top of the well and slips it will fall down into the well with great speed and sometime even along with the person who draws the same (Deshpande 1963 :87-87).

Thus, the growth in mystical experiences (spiritual ascent) - slow or fast can be attributed to incessant ethical and spiritual efforts accompanied by Divine grace and absence of the same may lead to spiritual descent from which one may or may not recover.

Notes :

1. Whenever mystics pass through the period of dark night of the soul, face critical moments or the death, temporary disappearance or fainting of mystical experiences are quite possible and these are not to be mistaken for spiritual 'fall'.

Great mystics like Tukarama, Namdeva have passed through the period of dark night of the soul (*Vide* for details 1988 : 193, 299-300).

When the tremors of an earthquake shook the region of Allahabad in 1943, the '*swarup*' (spiritual form) disappeared from Gurudeo's vision (*Vide* for details 1965 : 99).

Jnanadeva is ....careful to describe the signs of approaching death. "When a man shuts his ears and does not hear the sound, he should know that he is going to die in nine days' time. When he looks at his brows and does not see them, he shall live only for seven days. By rubbing the eye, if he is not able to see the circle, he will live only for five days. When he does not see the tip of his nose, on that day he will pass out of life. This indeed is the mark of a saint, says Jnanadeva, and one may realise this at the time of death (Ranade 1988 : 173).

When Jesus Christ was on his way to crucification "the face of God" suddenly disappeared from his vision (*Vide* for details, Deshpande 1963 : 49-50, Tulpule 1965 : 151). The dimness of intuitive vision is also a sign of ill omen. A few days before Gurudeo's *Niryana* his Divine experiences grew fainter and fainter (*Vide* for details Kulkarni 1949 :162 :80).

According to Gurudeo the spiritual pathway is not straight; it is zigzag; it is spiral. When we are proceeding along the winding path of spirituality, we have at times, the unique pleasure of having a glimpse of a unique scenery ahead. Just, then, our path takes a turn and the scene goes out of sight, leaving faint memory behind to continue our effort to reach the top (Ranade 2003 : 14,50).

2. Spiritual experience may not necessarily grow bit by bit, there may be sudden explosion; we must keep waiting for it. When one meditates regularly, one, all of a sudden, get a supernal experience of a high order. One's eyes should always be set on such an experience because such an experience is rather rare (Ranade 2006 : 9).

In this respect, the conversation that was held between Gurudeo and Vaidya - an old gentleman from Solapur is as under :-

Vaidya said, "We had been to Mathura. At the time of Darshan there I had the 'vision' of the dancing idol of Lord Krishna." Gurudeo remarked, "Thus, it happens ! While getting this kind of experience, our devotion gets intensified and all of a sudden there is rise in it. What is meant by this is, if your spiritual level is one hundred, that level will be raised to one thousand and can have rare experiences and afterwards when the level of devotion comes down, instead of the level of one hundred, it will remain constant, say at the level of two hundred (Kulkarni 2004 :34-35).

3. Perfection in mystical experience can be attained only gradually. One must not expect to reach the end immediately that one has entered the path. ...Granted that the field is well-tilled and watered; granted also that the seed that is sown is good of its kind, but it is only in time that a rich harvest is reaped (Ranade 1988 : 127).

4. ......in regard to the person who has experienced in himself the existence of the serpent, it might turn its mouth either downwards or upwards; in the former case it tends towards sensuous life; while in the latter, it tends towards God (Ranade 1960 : 66).

5. On one occasion, in 1910, while sitting for meditation, Gurudeo began to hear raging sound as if the whole universe (*Brahmanda*) was falling apart. He became absolutely powerless even to lift his hand from his heart in mortal fear and exclaimed it would have been much better if he had not been priviledged to have that kind of experience and he prayed to God that by doing meditation if such experience occurs, he would stop taking His *Nama*. There was terrific fear inside, no doubt, but there was also at the same time abounding joy. He wanted to have a revision of that experience over again, but revisions are not in man's hands and one has to leave them to the sweet will of God. Such experiences can annihilate the ego of devotees (*Vide* for details, Sangoram 1964 :113, Tulpule 1965 :145, *Divyanama* 2001 : 28-29).

6. The Saint of Umadi emphatically declares that even if his disciples "fall" into hell, he lifts them up by holding their tufts (Kulkarni 1995 :337).

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-Prof. **K. B. Dabade**, M.A., Ph. D.,
4-2-30B-1, 'Namamrita', Nandavihar, 5th Cross,
Narayankere, Udupi-576 103.
Ph. : **0820 - 2527386.**

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WHAT EXACTLY IS REALITY AND WHAT IS ITS RELATION WITH THIS WORLD ?

The question of Ultimate reality is a very, very deep one.Of course, the word ultimate carries a very unambiguous meaning, but not the word reality. What exactly is reality? I want to define it from the very beginning. Suppose you take an ornament of gold; that ornament will change after sometime into another ornament. A bangle can become a ring, a ring can become a necklace. But there is an unchanging aspect in all these ornaments and that is gold. Now , gold is called real. The reality of the ornament is only the gold. But you should not go with the impression that the ornament is unreal. It is not unreal. It is a sort of a transactional reality, but real, not in the sense, that we are going to define. What is reality? Reality is the unchanging aspect. That which is changing in time, is called Real. That which changes, is called a transactional reality. If it is changing, how can we call it as real after having defined the word real, as unchanging? If this question is asked, you should notice, that the changing reality contains the actual reality.Just as an ornament cannot be free from gold, here also the transactional reality is not free from the actual reality. So by reality I mean the unchanging aspect of the entire universe. Therefore we want to know what exactly is the reality contained in this world. We know definitely that the entire world is changing, actually, it is changing continuously; from minute to minute it is changing. We know that even the sun and the moon and the stars, are changing and certainly there is also a time when they will not exist. And we also know that there was a time when all these things were created. Therefore, all these things that we grasp through our senses are taking their birth and they live for sometime continuously changing, and finally they also see their death. Nevertheless we deal with them; therefore this is all a transactional reality. But we are interested in knowing what exactly is the reality in this whole universe.

Now, the concept of reality, I will not simply base it on dogma. We will go to the best of our ability, on very logical grounds, on irrefutable logic. Now the scientists, during past about 3 to 4 hundred years, have been thinking about the ultimate reality of the Universe. What is the stuff out of which the entire universe is made ? That is the question. In the beginning scientists postulated that the whole world, all the things, that we see are consisting of molecules. Finally they were able to understand quite a few things about the world of solids, liquids and gases. But there came a stage when they found that molecules were not the ultimate reality. Why? Why did they feel that this is not ultimate reality? Because the molecules themselves are changing. Molecules were produced. Molecules were destroyed. They are changing and they are not homogeneous. They are in-homogegeneous. Therefore, they concluded that molecules cannot be the ultimate reality. So they went on postulating from various methods of inference and analogy. They told that atoms are the ultimate stuff, the basic stuff of the universe. They were happy because quite a few phenomena about the molecules are also explained on the basis of atoms. But what happened in due course? A large number of atoms, actually 92, were discovered and that number went on increasing and finally today perhaps there are 122 atoms or 125 atoms. Some of them are unsteady. They are changing. They are born, live for a short time and then die. They can also be devided. Therefore, this cannot be the ultimate reality. So what did they do ? They wanted to think of an inner structure even for the atom. They came out with an idea of nucleus and some peripheral electron. What happened in due course? Even here, there are two : there is an electron and these are also changing. Something is happening inside it. There is motion inside. Therefore, this cannot be the ultimate reality. In fact, there were some strange experiments as a result of which they could break the nucleus and it was the opening of Pandora's Box. When the nucleus was broken there were simply thousands and thousands of particles. They thought that everything would reduce into one. But now there were millions of particles with all sorts of strange properties, very crazy sometimes. Therefore, they told that they had not arrived at the ultimate structure, the basic structure. Now they have started thinking that all this multiplicity is made of some basic fields like gravitational field, electromagnetic field, this field, that field so on and so forth. But even in fields the number is quite large. Certainly you cannot give any sort of guarantee that there cannot be a new field. Even these fields cannot also be the ultimate reality, because they are also changing. Therefore, there doesn't seem to be any end to this process. Actually people are familiar with some modern aspects of logic. One Mr. Kruth Godel, about a century ago, shattered the hopes of achieving success in this process. He showed that one cannot arrive at the ultimate reality by inference. Of course people are very much disturbed by those theorems, but still they,are pursuing it with dogged tenacity. Therefore let us ask what makes the scientist restless? What makes him to probe further in the direction of ultimate reality? He knows that the whole thing is made of something ultimate. What should be its nature ?

If you study the restlessness of the scientists from step to step, from molecules to atoms, atoms to particles, particles to fields and so on, you will see one thing : What is the gut feeling of the scientist? It is that the ultimate reality must be some sort of stuff, which is unchanging. Till I get that ultimate stuff, which is unchanging, I feel restless because any change implies that there is something else inside, something cooking which you have not understood. Therefore, the gut feeling of the scientist can be postulated as an axiom. I am not quoting any dogma here. The gut feeling of the scientist tells that it should be unchanging thing ? What exactly is it ? Let us see. Now the entire universe is before us. Our desire is to filterout that unchanging reality, the ultimate reality. So for the time being let us assume the so-called evolution theory, though it is difficult to accept it in totality. Letusaccept a gross approach of the evolution theory. We can say it started from the big bang. Assume it. Why do I say assume? It is because all scientific theories are bound to change.

You cannot help it. There is no finality in science. There is the result proved by Kruth Godel. Therefore, let us tentatively start from the big bang. So something happened the first three seconds as they describe. There were galaxies. And there were stars and then there were sparks and everything came out, finally the earth and finally the oceans. Finally life has also emerged and we are all sitting here. It has exploded and finally arranged itself into two parts. What are the two parts? The one is inanimate inert world and the other is the animate world. What is the difference between animate and inanimate? What is inert? An inert body is one which continues to be in state of rest or uniform motion in a straight line unless impressed upon by an external force. That is the definition of inertness given by science. All inanimate things have this property of inertia. And we also know, that this evolution, didn't stop there. It also took another direction in which the animate world emerged. Now, how do we characterize this animate world as distinct from the inanimate world? It has free will. The free will is indicated by a free action. You can do whatever you want. You don't have to wait for somebody else to provoke you. That is the sign of animation. And what is the basic feature of the animation? The basic feature of animation is a thought process. Therefore, outside of us is the inanimate world and inside, the animate world, characterized by thought processes. This is the observer and that is the observed, in the language of science. The observer is getting the images of external world. The images are formed here. The moment I say I have understood something, what does it mean? It means that the image of external world is formed in the mind. I know it. Therefore the whole mental process consists of images of the external world coming and going, coming and going. And what is the inanimate world? The inannimate world itself is coming and going. There are the objects outside and their images inside. Now remember one thing - never forget it. Both of them have come from the same reality. Remember this. I am not talking of any dogma; I am talking from direct experience and science. Therefore, now you see the common feature between the outside and the inside worlds: The outside world of shapes is changing and here the thought processes are also changing. Therefore you can conclude that both these things are only effects of an ultimate cause, the final effects of an ultimate cause. What do I mean by effect? An ornnament is an effect of gold; a brick or a tile is an effect of clay and so on. I am using that word effect in this sense. So here when the ultimate reality is the basic stuff of this entire creation, you are noticing that this ultimate reality is simply evolving and finally ending off in two branches as it were. One branch is an animate world and another the inanimate world. Both are characterized by change, from momennt to moment. This animate world is also changinng. In what sense? Now the awareness I have is of the lamp. My attention later goes to a table. Now the awareness of the lamp has gone and the awareness of the table has come. Therefore, this so-called awareness, are coming and going; they are also changing. Therefore they are also effects of only this same ultimate reality. Now let us see what is the unchanging aspect of the mental processes. What is the unchanging aspect here? I got the awareness of the lamp, it is gone. Then awareness of the table, it is gone. Then awareness of the chair, it is gone. Therefore, what is it that is changing? Awareness of lamp is changing to awareness of table. Here, remember, the awareness that I am getting are qualified awarenesses. What's a qualified awareness? A qualified awareness is one in which the awareness is the noun and there is an adjective 'of the lamp', or 'of the chair' or 'of the table'.

Thus if you search for an unchanging part of the animate world, then you are arriving at the conclusion that awareness is the ultimate content. I suppose I am conveying what I mean. In this changing awareness the adjectives of the table, of the lamp, of the chair are going and coming. But the noun awareness is not going or coming. It's always there. It is not awareness of something it is just Awareness. In the next step you are taking a big leap. The leap is the following :

What is the leap? The ultimate reality is not only unchanging but when I search for its effects here inside myself, it is characterized by changing awarenesses and when I search for the unchanging aspect of that, then I arrive at awareness itself. Therefore the ultimate reality is unchanging and also it is Awareness. An Awareness, which is also unchanging. Therefore the ultimate reality is characterized by two parameters. What are the parameters? One is unchangeability and two is Awareness. Remember this remarkable thing. We went on searching outside but finally it so happened when I started investigating, the ultimate reality is not only outside, it is also inside. Now this Awareness is an aspect of experience and that unchangeability is an aspect of observation. Therefore we say that ultimate reality is characterized by unchangeability and awareness. What is this awareness? In order to know, what is this awareness I will have to digress a little. Now let us see: when

I say observer, do not mistake for the body of the observer. The body is also changing. It is inert. The body belongs only to the inanimate world. Then what about the sensory organs? They are also belonging to the external world. How? Because I am witnessing the changing of the sensory organs. I say my eyes are working properly. After sometime I say "My eyes are not working properly. I hear properly, I do not hear properly. I have developed a sort of numbness. I can't feel the touch, there is no taste. There is some trouble; I can't smell". Therefore, all these five sensory organs are only aspects of the external world because I am observing them. I am differentiating like this, on the basis of this principle of the observer and the observed. When the external world is observed by the eyes, eye is a sort of an observer. But what about the eye? The eye itself is obsereved inwardly. Therefore eye itself becomes observable and something inside is becoming the observer. I am knowing everything from the mind. Therefore mind should be the ultimate observer. There is a tendency to feel like this. But the question that we have before us is whether mind is ultimate observer. But we notice that mind is also not the ultimate observer. In fact, one great mathematical Physicist Von Neumann has come step by step and finally he arrives at the mind - the ego - that is final observer. But he is very intelligent. He has not put a stop there, just a comma and also more dots indicating that he is not sure that ego is the ultimate observer. In fact it is not. How?

When you are tired of this activity, you want to rest. The moment you lie down you disconnect yourself from the inert body. Then for sometime you are working only with your mind. Then you are tired there also. You withdraw yourself even from the mind and you go into deep sleep. When you are going to deep sleep, the mind is absent. It is no longer functioning. The moment you get up it starts functioning and you also know that the mind is changing in-between. Therefore the property of the mind is also exactly same as that of the observed world. What is that? It is also getting up, it is active and then afterwards it is silent. Once again it takes rest. So nothing is there. From the experience of deep sleep you notice that even mind is not the ultimate observer. What is the significant conclusion? In order to draw the significant conclusion you must be very careful about the following steps. Some people describe deep sleep as a state of unconsciousness. The word unconsciouness is simply bandied about. Nobody knows what unconscious is. But they will simply say unconscious. Now I do not want to be ambiguous like that. When you say you are unconscious what do you mean actually? You only mean that you are not aware of chairs, that you are not conscious of tables, that you are not conscious of lamps. But actually you are not unconscious. How do you say that I am not unconscious? The moment I get up, I say I did not know anything. I know there was nothing. Therefore I could not have been unconscious. You will also say 'I enjoyed very good sleep'. You might have been unconscious of the external world but you were happy. You express it yourself. 'I was extremely happy, I had a very nice sleep.' Therefore you were present there. You are unconscious in the sense that you are not conscious of the external world. That does not mean that you have lost Awareness. So what exactly is the situation?

The situation is I am getting a glimpse of this ultimate reality in my deep sleep. What is ultimate reality? I told it is pure awareness without any adjectives and it is also unchanging. Now here is a situation where I am actually experiencing reality. I am getting the glimpse of ultimate reality myself in my deep sleep, because, there is only Awareness. No adjectives to it , and it is unchanging. There is nothing there to change. Therefore remember that searching for the ultimate reality only outside is wrong. You have yourself told that the ultimate reality has itself evolved and finally life has also emerged. When you, have yourself accepted it, then you should search for the ultimate reality within yourself. How can you seperate it from yourself? Because yourself is also only an effect of the ultimate cause. Therefore search not only outside but also inside. So when you have searched both sides you are saying that the ultimate reality is not pervading only outside but it is also pervading inside. Therefore in essence you will see that this ultimate reality is pervading everywhere always. Now this is a very pithy statement - the Taittiriya Upanishad (2.1) says - "Satyam jnaanam anantam Brahma. Yo veda nihitam guhaayaaṁ parame vyoman. So ashnute sarvaan saha" - That is : this ultimate reality is Satyam, that is unchanging. It is Jnaana, it is awareness, pure Awareness without adjectives and Anantam, it is limitless. And it is not such an ultimate reality as you are simply disconnected with it. No, you are also connected with it. No, you are also connected with it. Actually you can experience it yourself in deep sleep. Therefore I find it difficult to understand when somebody talks 'A concept of ultimate reality'. A concept is a sort of a mental structure of a thinker. I refuse to accept that word. Ultimate reality is objective. It is something that exists. If we know it OK, it is good for us. If you don't know it, it is our loss; that is all.It is not a concept to be debated. It is something that is to be recognized. I think I am conveying the difference between the two. It is not meant simply to discuss intellectually its context. My concept is this, your concept is this. Let us all reconcile and not quarrel about it. Nothing like that. It is an objective reality, so here you are having a wonderful situation. What is this wonderful situation? Now recognize the situation and ask this question, who am I? If you ask this question, who am I, automatically without any hesitation you identify yourself with the body and say I am so and so. I am a man, I am a woman, this, that and so on and so forth. My weight is so much. My height is so much. But the inert body is observable and Awareness is the observer. You are the observer! How can you identify with the body? The body, the sense organs are also observables. The motor organs are also observables. The respiratory parts are also observable and even mind is observable. Therefore who are you?

In order to know who you are, you have to proceed in the following way : Consider an example. Suppose somebody wants to get admitted to army. Now, he wears very heavy shoes and a big overcoat and all that. Along with that his height and weight are not measured. What do they say? 'We want only **your** weight. Therefore remove all the shoes and remove the overcoat. Just we will measure your height and weight'. Similarly, here also, if you want to know who you are, who exactly you are, you must free yourself from those things, which you are not. You are told, you are the body but it was shown that you are not the body. Therefore leave it. You are told, you are the sense organs, I showed you are not. Therefore leave them. You told you are the motor organs, I showed you are not that. You free yourself. Therefore free yourself from everything including mind. When do you free yourself from everything? It is only in deep sleep and in deep sleep you exist, you are not dead. You exist. But you are all alone as an observer not observing anything. No appendices. You are yourself and when you are yourself you are not seeing anything! Why? Because, nothing is different from the ultimate reality, just as no ornament is different from gold. Therefore, there is no action of seeing in the ultimate reality. And you are one with it during deep sleep. Oh, my God! You are yourself, the Ultimate Reality. Could there be something stranger than this? Therefore finally the ultimate reality whatever it is, it has emerged into the inanimate world and the animate world of foolish beings. I am using the word foolish beings in the following sense, foolish beings are those who identify themselves with the body. They are foolish people. And if they are intelligent enough, if they are able to separate themselves and they also go in search of the ultimate reality they will at once realise that the ultimate reality are themselves. The foolish fellow is actually the Ultimate Reality. But only he has to give up his foolishness, that is all.

Now I want to make a brief reference to the so called spiritual mysticism. What is that? If you take as seeing some visions and so on and so forth, I am not referring to it. Why I don't have to refer to it? Because, you can't prove it. It becomes only your personal experience. I am not interested in that. I am only talking of a thing, which can be universally accepted. Any rational being with a little grain of intelligence has to accept this statement. I want to talk of only those statements. Therefore what is this mysticism? Mysticism is this : With the help of the indication of deep sleep I have recognized that when I am free from all this foolishness, I free myself from this body and the entire world of effects, then I am myself the ultimate cause. Isn't it the ultimate truth? Now I have to live in this truth always. This is spiritual mysticism. I should live in that ultimate reality, that is I should not dabble in the world of effects, I should not be carried away in the world of effects and always live in That Ultimate Reality. It is That Ultimate Reality, which is called God. I have to live there, because I know fully well that when I am one with That, I am extremely happy. I know it in my deep sleep. You can't deny happiness there. It is there. Now I want to be always happy. Suppose I want to be always happy how can I do it? Can I always be sleeping? Does it mean that? No. Even when I am awake I should not loose my identity with the Ultimate Reality; let me make it a little more specific. In wakefulness I am identifying myself with the body and thinking that I am doing so many activities. I have lost cotact with the ultimate truth when I am awake. Now what is to be done to continue to be in contact with it? What is to be done is, even though the sensory organs and the body are active externally I should not lose my awareness that I am the ultimate consciousness. This is not impossible. How? I will tell you. What's the relationship between the world of effects and the ultimate reality? It is the same as between ornament and gold. Gold is the ultimate reality and ornament is the effect. Now gold is not separated from the ornament. Gold is there. In fact the effect contains only gold and nothing else. Take for instance, an ornament. We refer it in two ways, we refer to it as the ornament that you can wear and you also refer to it as gold, which you cannot wear. I refer to the same pot of clay as a pot in which I can store some water but I can also refer to it as clay in which you cannot store water. Therefore it is possible for me to shift my attention from the idea of pot to the idea of clay, from the idea of ornament to the idea of gold. Similarly, because the world is not separated from ultimate reality, I have to learn to associate myself with the ultimate cause and not with effects. That is spiritual mysticism. Once that is achieved the entire creation looks trivial. It becomes meaningless. Remember I am not telling the world is unreal. There is wide-spread wrong belief that Vedanta has said the world is unreal and that Shankaracharya has also told it is unreal. It is scandalously wrong. In fact what Shankaracharya has told is the following : suppose you have an ornament of gold and you keep a mirror in front of it and from this side you only look at the image of the ornament. Now the image of the ornament looks exactly like the ornament but it is not an ornament. Why? Because it doesn't have gold. Therefore you say the mirror image of an ornament is an illusion of an ornament. Here this entire world is an ornament. Its ultimate cause is the Supreme God. Now suppose you say that supreme God is somewhere in the heaven dangling there and the world is independent here; now I have to be in search of him and I will try to go there by doing all sorts of things. Now what does that mean? It is something like you have separated the ornament from the gold and looking only at the shape. Such a shape is simply an illusion, which is like an ornament without gold. Therefore Shankaracharya is cautioning common people, foolish people like us - Remember that this entire world is full of God. It is nothing but God. It is not at all different from God, just because it has a shape. Don't think it is not God. Just because it is in the form of a neckless you don't say it is not gold. It is gold, it continues to be gold. Similarly here in spite of appearing in so many shapes, recognize the world as God. If you don't recognize it, if you separate God somewhere and send him out, banish Him from here, then the world that you are seeing is an illusion. This is what Shankara has told in unambiguous words. Don't think I am interpreting his statements. It is literally what he told. Therefore spiritual mysticism consists of seeing the Supreme God everywhere. Not many human beings, animals, creatures, in even inert objects and here comes role of religion. What is the role of religion? Religion has to teach this final lesson. This final lesson has to be taught. Everything is made of God and God alone. In fact, what do you see? You see a gambler, you see a drunkard, and you see a wife-beater. You see a crooked fellow, a thief. All these abnormalities are contained only in the body and in the mind. The moment he sleeps, when he is free from all these things, it is the same Supreme awareness that I am having - not at all different. Therefore there must be a law to punish a criminal, no doubt about it. But for a spiritual aspirant, you should recognize the same God even in a thief. Therefore the great Rishis have evolved certain system of training. Worship anything. Even when you take a stone, worship it. Why? Because, there is God in that. Put a little water, worship it. Why? Because, there is God in it. Put a fire, worship it. In fact, get some cow dung. There is God in it. Worship it. Therefore religion is only a sort of a practical approach to realize the Ultimate Reality and realizing this itself is the ultimate mysticism, spiritual mysticism. In fact, all mystics all over in the world tell this. You know it. I know some statements of some mystics, at least in Sikh religion I know.

Therefore I have to summarize, in a nutshell all that I have said. A scientist is trying to find something, which he is not able to articulate. What is it he wants in his heart of hearts ? What is his gut feeling? Where he is driving at? If you see, then he is actually driving towards finding the Supreme Ultimate reality, which is God. This is the definition of God. In fact we go on discussing and quarreling about God because when we do not even have the definition of God there is a lot of scope for quarreling. When we start making precise definitions there will be very little difference between people. Therefore it is the Supreme God, the Ultimate Reality which has evolved into the animate and the inanimate world; if you look beyond the changing aspect of the world you will see that it is awareness. Therefore the Ultimate Reality is unchanging, it is an Awareness and it is all pervading. The moment you recognize it as yourself who can quarrel with whom? Who can hate whom? Who can lust for whom? To one who has realized, there will be neither lust, nor anger nor grief, nor jealousy. Everything is a world of effects coming and going. I am simply firmly standing on my own - I am the Ultimate Truth. Therefore in the brief time that is available I have made my best effort to project my thoughts and I thank the organizers for calling me here and I pray for a good success for this Conference. People who have come from other religions, I appeal to you, this is a land of peace, this is a land of knowledge, in fact it is called - BHARAT. What is Bharat? Bha is knowledge, Rata is one who takes pleasure in indulging in it, indulging in knowledge. So this is Bharat. Let us not be dogmatic. Let us come together. Let us see and once again let us unearth the most precious, the most valuable wisdom that is contained in this land. Irrespective of what any-body may say, we are all one. No doubt about it. Is there any doubt? They have been foolish. In fact I can unnderstand one thing. Long ago, kings attacked other countries. They told plainly, I want to grab that land. I want to loot that money. They told it is plain business. That is appreciable. Now what is being done? You are quarreling in the name of God. That is atrocious. Why do you want to bring in, the name of God for the sake of your quarrels? Just plainly quarrel. I want to grab your money. I can understand that. It's more reasonable. OK. Don't pull-in the name of God and go on arguing here. Let us be objective, let us be scientific, let us be rationnal and we are bound to arrive at one common idea which will satisfy everyone.

Thank you very much.

-The Revered **Swami Paramanand Bharati.**

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The above speech/article is taken from the proceedings of the Seminar "Concept of Ultimate Reality" held in Pune on the 50th death anniversary of Gurudev Ranade on 6th & 7th June 2007.

- P. D. Dharwarkar,
Member, Editorial Board.

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Records of the spiritual experiences of saints cannot be understood unless we have the devotional element in us. No doubt intellectual understanding may lend a helping hand. Those who have drunk deep at the fount of mystical experience can alone know its value.

-Gurudev Ranade.

RAMAGITA (Part II)

(Continued from earlier issue).

Just as a crystal-stone due to contact (with a coloured thing nearby it) appears to be of that colour(of the thing nearby it), so also this Self appears to be of that size i.e. of the nature of that sheath, when it is in contact with these various sheaths. But if and when (the real nature of) this (Self) is fully and properly thought over, then it is known that this Self being unattached (asanga) and unborn (aja) is unique i.e. one without a second (31).

Explanation : The three bodies which become the upadhis of the Self are thought of as five sheaths that cover the Self, and hence a man is unable to know the Self. The five sheaths are thus enumerated :- Annamaya, Pranamaya, Manomaya, Vijnanamaya and Anandmaya. The gross body itself is called the Annamaya sheath, as it is a modification[1] of the food. The subtle body includes in it Pranamaya, Manomaya and Vijnanamaya[2] sheaths, as it includes pranas, mind and intellect (vijnana). And the causal[3] body (i.e. Nescience) itself is called the Anandmaya sheath.

These sheaths are so-called because they cover[4] the Self, as a pillow-cover conceals the pillow. Due to the common quality of concealing, they are called sheaths.

Now the Self is different from the three bodies[5] and hence from these five sheaths also. Yet what happens in this empirical life is this :- Due to Nescience an individual thinks that one of the sheaths is the Self. e.g. One says, 'I am tall'. Really the body is tall; but as body is taken to be the Self, one says, 'I am tall'. Here the gross body, i.e. Annamaya sheath is taken to be the Self. In a similar manner, when a man says, 'I am hungry', 'I am full of sorrow', 'I am intelligent', etc. sheaths like pranamaya, manomaya, vijnannmaya are taken to be the Self. Hence in this verse it is said, 'Kosesvayam........vibhati.'

Here a question may arise : why is there this identification of the Self with one of the sheaths? The reply is given in the example of a crystal. A crystal by its very nature is clearly white. But when it comes in contact with a coloured thing, the coloured thing becomes the upadhi of the crystal, and due to that upadhi the crystal appears to be of the colour which the coloured thing has. In a similar manner, due to the upadhis of the five[6] sheaths, one begins to wrongly suppose that one of the sheaths is the Self. Thus the Self though it is pure like a crystal appears to be one of the sheaths, on account of the upadhis of those sheaths.

Now, if the Self is neither the bodies nor the sheaths, then what is it? The answer is :- The Self is unborn, non-attached to anything and non-dual. And this is known, when a man[7] fully thinks over the matter.

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As the Self is identified with the sheaths, in empirical life, the Self seems to undergo three states (avastha), but really they are not possible in case of the Self. This is pointed out in the following stanza No. 32.

(32)

बुद्धेस्त्रिधा वृत्तिरपीह दृष्यते
स्वप्नादि-भेदेन गुण-त्रयात्मन: ।
अन्योन्यतोऽस्मिन् व्याभिचारतो मृषा
नित्ये परे ब्रह्मणि केवलं शिवे ॥३२॥

Here(in this empirical life) there are seen three modes of (mind) intellect (complex) which consists of the group of three qualities (namely sattva, rajas and tamas) in the form of different states like dream, etc. But every state is absent in the other two states. Hence these (three) states are false (i.e. not connected with) the single, eternal, highest Brahman which is bliss (Siva) (32).

Explanation :- In Microcosm, Self comes to have upadhis of three bodies and it wrongly identifies itself with the five sheaths in empirical life. The Self (Atman) is reflected in intellect and is called jiva (see verse No. 40). Now this intellect (buddhi) being a product of Nescience which possesses three qualities of Sattva, Rajas and Tamas naturally inheres these qualities. Now in empirical life, the main apparatus of jiva is intellect. The intellect functions with the help of the mind and the senses. Now, there occur three different states in view as to whether the senses, mind and intellect are functioning or not. That is to say : When senses, mind and intellect are functioning, there is what is called State of Waking (jagrti); when senses are inactive but mind and intellect are functioning there is the state of Dream (svapna). And when the senses, mind and intellect are not functioning there is the state of Sleep (susupti).

These three states are mutually exclusive (vyabhicaratah). That is to say :-When there is one state, other two states are absent. e.g. when there is Waking state, dream and sleep are absent. When there is Dream state, waking and sleep are absent. And when there is the state of sleep, waking and dream are absent. Thus, these three states are mutually exclusive and transient.

These three temporary states have nothing to do with the Self; they have no connection with and influence on the permanent witnessing Self, who is identical with the highest Self/Brahman. Hence they are[1] *mrsa* in case of the single, eternal, blissful, highest Self i.e. Brahman. These three states arise due to upadhis of the three bodies. The upadhis never affect the thing round which they gather. Thus these states being due to upadhis cannot affect the permanently luminous and blissful Self.

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Empirical life is nothing but a cycle of births and rebirths (Verse No. 7). Birth is due to actions (Verse No. 8, 10). Action is due to egoism (see Verse No. 14). This egoism is present in the intellect. Thus so long as there are body, senses, mind and intellect, the empirical life cannot be avoided. This is stated by the following Verse No. 33.

(33)

देहेन्द्रिय-प्राण-मनश्चिदात्मनां
संगादजस्रं परिवर्तते धियः ।

वृत्तिस्तंमोमूल तयाज्ञलक्षणा
यावद् भवेत नावदसौ भवोद्भवः ॥३३॥

Due to coming together of body, senses, vital breaths, mind and the conscious Self, the modes of intellect go on changing constantly. As the quality Tamas is at the root/base of these modes, the modes are of the nature of Nescience. And as long as these modes continue, the origination of empirical life (or new birth) continues (33).

Explanation :- So long as Body, Senses, mind, intellect, egoism and reflection of Self in intellect and the Self remain together, the intellect along with others goes on functioning. That function leads to many actions which lead to origination of new births i.e. empirical life.

The mode of intellect is here said to be 'tamomulataya ajna-laksana'. Intellect is a constituent part of the subtle body (see Verse No. 29). Subtle bodies proceed from subtle elements which originate from the quality Tamas in the Neiscence. Hence the quality Tamas is at the root of the mode of intellect. Further the quality of tamas is characterised by ignorance (ajnana). The quality of Tamas along with Sattva and Rajas is inherent in the intellect. Hence the mode of intellect is here said to be characterised by ignorance (ajna-laksana). Here the word 'ajna' stands for 'ajnana' (ignorance).

(To be continued..........)

Prof. Dr. K. V. Apte,

Yajurved Appts., ST Colony, Vishrambag, Sangli-416415.

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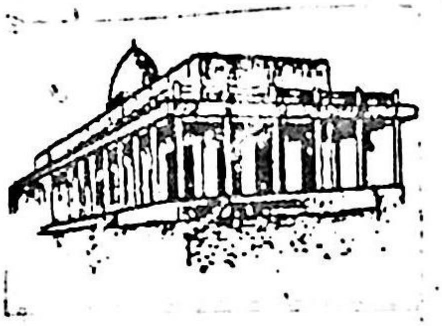
ACTIVITIES OF A. C. P. R.



Quarterly Report for the
period ending 30th June 2008.

ACPR celebrated the 51st Punyatithi of Shri. Gurudev Dr. R. D. Ranade, from 30th May '08 to 1st June '08. On 30th May 2008, Shri Sadguru Mallikarjun Swamiji of Avaradimath delivered a lecture during evening hours on **Guruling Jangam Maharaj.** The said function was conducted under the presidentship of Dr. B. K. Jagjampi, Principal Lingaraj College, Belgaum.

On 31-5-'08 Param Puja Shri Dr. Prabhu Chennabasav Swamiji of Motagimath, Athani delivered lecture on Shri. Guru **Shivayogi Jeevan Darshan.The** said function was presided over by Dr. M. M. Kalburgi, Vice Chancellor of Hampi University, Hampi.

On concluding day, 01-06-2008, from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. Shri. Chennabasav Swamiji of Motagimath Athani delivered lecture on Shri. Guru Shivayogi Swamiji of Athani **Jeevan Darshan** Part 2nd . Saptah ended with Guru Vandana and flowering. On all above days, **Dasabodha** vachan, Meditation were held. All trustees of A. C. P. R. Belgaum and large number of devotees/scholars attended the function.

On 6th June 2008, Dr. R. D. Ranade College of Yogic Sciences and Research, Hindwadi, Belgaum held function in premises and distributed the passing certificates to the successful candidates for the academic year 2006-07. The function was presided over by Prin. Mrs. Aruna Naik, and Dr. Smt. Madhuri Dixit. All trustees of A. C. P. R. Belgaum and large number of devotees were present.

A. C. P. R. thanks the following donors :

1. M/s. Polyhydron,	Belgaum,	Rs. 5,000/-.
2. Shri. A. A. Maitrani,	Belgaum,	Rs. 3,051/-.

3. Shri. Panchakshari Chonnad,	Belgaum	Rs. 2500/-.
4. Shri. Suprabhat R. Jakati,	,,	Rs. 2,500/-.
5. Shri. K. R. Kulkarni,	,,	Rs. 2,000/-.
6. Shri. Shrikrishna Kelkar.	,,	Rs. 1,000/-.
7. Shri. Ashok M. Potdar,	,,	Rs 1,000/-.
8. Shri. Ajitrao Kulkarni,	,,	Rs. 1001/-.
9. Smt. Amruta A. Kulkarni,	,,	Rs. 1001/-.
10. Shri. Ajay R. Heda,	,,	Rs 1001/-.
	Total	Rs. 20,054/-.

A.C.P.R. Welcomes the New Subscribers to Pathway To God : 1. Shri. Vithal Y. Yalgi, Belgaum, 2. Shri. K. S. Raibagi, Nipani, 3. Shri. Kiran Shah, Dharwad, 4. Shri. M. S. Kalli, Bailhongal.

Belgaum. **M. B. Zirali,**
30-6-08 *Trustee & Secretary, A.C.P.R.*

OBITUARY

Shri. J. M. KULKARNI

Shri. J. M. Kulkarni, was born on 4-8-1923. He joined Gurudev Mandir as Trustee in A. C. P. R. in 1992, became Secretary in 1994 and Vice-Chairman in 1999. He was an ardent devotee of Gurudev Ranade.
He expired on 29-5-2008.

We pray to God to give peace to the departed soul.

Shri. K. R. KULKARNI

Shri. K.R. Kulkarni, was born on 10-11-1932, He joined Gurudev Mandir as Trustee in A. C. P. R. and was Vice-Chairman from 1991 to 1996. He was an ardent devotee of Gurudev Ranade. He expired on 16-6-2008.

We pray to God to give peace to the departed soul.

ACPR's
DEVELOPMENTAL PLANS

I. ACPR's INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH CENTRE IN COMPARATIVE PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGION

(a) Research wing for Empirical Dynamics (b) Wing for Data Collection.

(c) Wing for Data Processing. (d) Wing for inferential co-ordination.
(e) Textual Research wing (f) Library.

II. ACPR's INTERNATIONAL CENTRE FOR AFFILIATION AND COLLABORATION

Active representation and working presence of the internationally reputed Organisation in the field of Research in Philosophy and Religion, Sociology, and the growing trends of studies in Theo-polity. Apart from updating the activities, the Collaborations will ensure the result oriented activities.

III. ACPR's CYBER INFORMATION CENTRE FOR MAJOR RELIGIONS / FAITHS OF THE WORLD.

To be projected throughout modern Audio-visual/Intel modes and devices and also supported by models, sculpture, architectural representations, textual-ritual other data. It is proposed to be developed as Visuals /Textual 'Model-Centre' of Information about the performing religions / faiths.

IV. ACPR's INTERNATIONAL CENTRE FOR HOLISTIC EDUCATION :

a) Model Holistic School for catching ACPR's Unity theme with the children and tender youth world over, of all faiths and religions.

b) School for refreshing re-orientation to be modelled as a training center for Academicians, Legislators, Administrators, Leaders / Intellectual spokesmen of the Society.

c) Special centre for rural awareness.

V. ACPR's PRINTING AND PUBLICATION CENTRE

VI. BUILDINGS

a. Residential Quarters for the selected seniormost executive / office bearers.

b. Hostels for research students.

c. Guest House.

VII. AUDITORIUM FOR SEMINARS, CONFERENCES AND SYMPOSIUMS

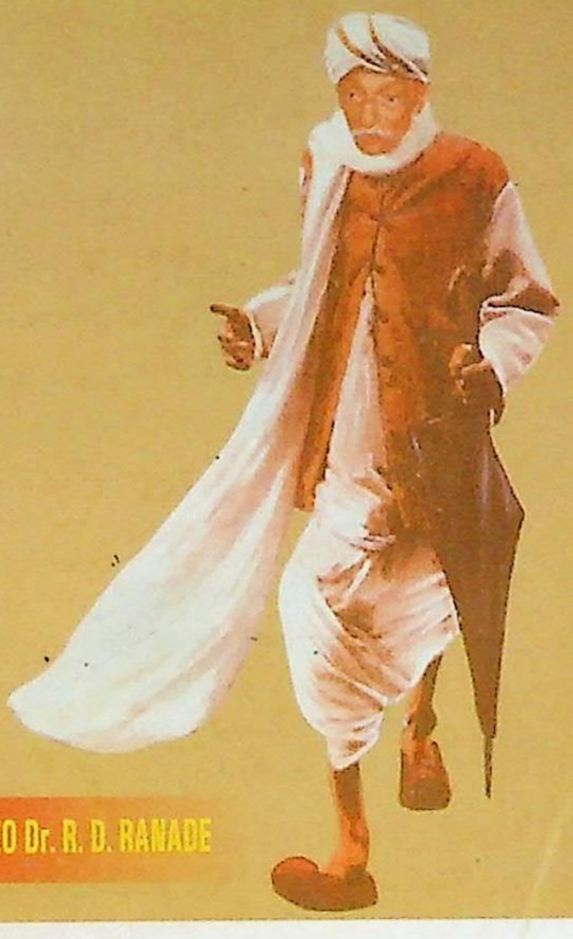
VIII. CO-ORDINATING ADMINISTRATIVE HEADQUARTERS

FOOTPRINTS ON THE SANDS OF TIME

A Profile of

ACPR

Global Mission of a Mystic Visionary



A PRESENTATION BY ACPR, BELGAUM FOUNDED BY GURUDEO Dr. R. D. RANADE

ACPR'S
GOLDEN JUBILEE
AGENDA
Pursuit for
Global awareness
for

ONE GOD
ONE WORLD
ONE HUMANITY

ACPR

"ACPR is the Global Call for Awareness of Unity given by the Modern Prophet Gurudeo Dr. R. D. Ranade. Humanity is the New Religion. Rational Mysticism is the new secular language, where fiath joins Reason .... Divine Art of Living and Growing in Peace is the wisdom to b acquired and ever updated ....ACPR is Humankind's school for continuous learning .... A new Temple of knowledge .... with Unity of God .... Religion may vanish if Philosophies dawn to asset; Philosophies may vanish if Mysticism dawns to assert, and Holistic welfare of entire humankind may dawn if God asserts the mission of ACPR.

- Prof. N. R. Deshpande

If you have not received "FOOTPRINTS ON THE SANDS OF TIME" Copy,
Write to us, alongwith your address & Cheque / D.D. for Rs. 100/- payable to the
Academy of Comparative Philosophy & Religion, Belgaum as your Golden Jubilee Gesture